

# St Swithun's Church Newsletter

For information and inspiration

May 2011

## Bridging the gulf

The bridge is open!

How significant is this? Well, for motorists who have got fed up with sitting in ten minutes of traffic facing the opposite direction to where we want to go, it is significant.

For those who have had a big clear-out and are wanting to make use of the recycling site it is significant.

For cyclists wanting to save a little bit of energy (I am reliably informed by the cyclist in my family that the gradient on the underpass is such that it takes more effort to use the diversion than attack the hill of the bridge and enjoy the freewheeling on the way down) it is significant.

But, I am persuaded that the significance of the bridge's reopening goes deeper than any of these.

If you cast your mind back you will remember that writing in December's Chronicle, Father Paul used Red Bridge as an illustration of God reaching out

to humanity, bridging the gulf between himself and us.

At one end of the bridge he suggested, is 'the Cross, the sign of God's love, the sign

of sacrificial love which goes to the limit'. And Red Bridge reopened on Good Friday.

It is as if God is sending a message – that he is reaching out to this community of Kennington, wanting to share his love, forgiveness and new life that is symbolised by the cross. And that's where we, the church come in. It is up to us to be the place and the people where that is encountered. My prayer, this Eastertide, is that our Easter joy is infectious; that it bubbles over and that the love and hope we enjoy will be experienced by others. And that is significant.



*Em Coley*



## What's in a name?

We all enjoy baptisms, when we welcome new members into our church. In the Book of Common Prayer, the priest in the baptism service still asks the Godparents to 'name this child'. Of course today, the child's name will be on the birth certificate as a legal document.

But there is more to names. In Wales there are so many people named Jones, Williams or Thomas that they need something extra added to the name. In my village, the foreman of the tinsplate works exhorted his men by saying, 'don't let me down', so he was called Dai Balloon. Another had a missing front tooth and was known as 'Jack cnetral eating'.

Turning to the Bible, we come across Hannah. Like Abraham's wife Sarah, she was childless and prayed to God for a child. When a child was born, she called him Samuel, which means 'my God heard me'.

When God revealed his name in the burning bush, Moses said to God, 'If I come to the Israelites and say to them, "the God of your ancestors has sent me to you", what do I do if they ask "what is his name?"'. God replied, 'I AM WHO I AM'.

The name of God's son, Jesus, means 'the Lord saves', but there is also a reference to Jesus as Emmanuel, 'God is with us'. And what of the name Christ? Cristos is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew Messias, 'The annointed one'.

God tells us a lot when he says he is the living one who exists independently of creation and cannot be contained. As we see God more clearly, we are more likely to repeat his name and set in motion a process when we will see God face to face. Get to know him personally as he invites us to be on first-name terms with him; repeat

his name, and do not make wrongful use of it. So next time you are in his house why not just stand and think his name. You do not need to say anything, as God will most certainly speak to you.

*Gerry Bowen-Thomas*

### Chain of Prayer Day

On Monday 27 June there will be a special Chain of Prayer Day in church. On this day we hope as many people as possible will take a turn to be in church for a short period and pray for our village community and indeed for communities around the world. This is part of our preparation for the St Swithun's Flower Festival.

### Flower Festival

The Flower Festival will be happening from 15–17 July. The church will be transformed with beautiful flowers, and there will be a programme of events and refreshments as well. Don't miss out!





## Café in May and June

During May and June, there will be a café in the Church Hall run by Kennington Community Café Group. It will be open at these times:

- Mondays 2.00-5.00pm
- Thursdays 11.00am-1.00pm
- Saturdays 10.00am-1.00pm\*

Kennington Community Café is run by a group of residents who would love to see a more permanent café in the village.

We will be sharing our plans and ideas at the café in May and June, and looking for more people to lend their help and expertise to this social enterprise.

Why not drop in after school, on your way to the shops, to catch up with a friend or to read the papers?

If you want to know more, or **if you would like to help serve** at the café during May and June, please contact:

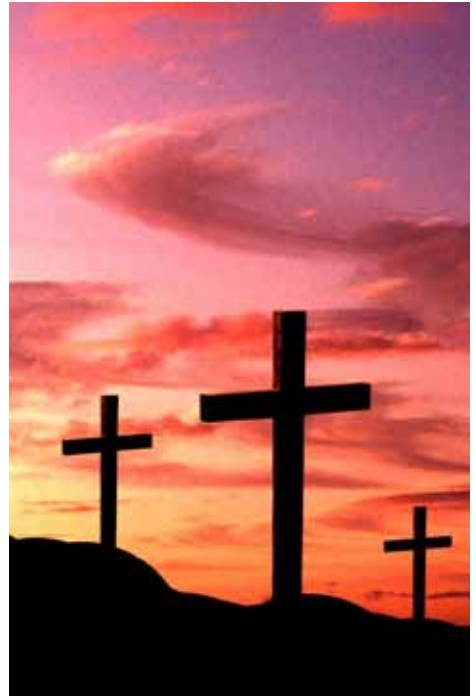
Martin Morse on 326641 or [martin@morse.org.uk](mailto:martin@morse.org.uk)

\*During Artweeks and on Fête Day, refreshments will be available from 12 noon (12& 14 May; 18 June)



# Pause for Prayer

Jesus said: 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.'  
John 11:25 -26



## Please pray...

Give thanks:

- For the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ
- For the life and hope that the risen Jesus offers

Pray for:

- The courage to speak of our faith to others
- The opportunity to share the fullness of life we enjoy
- The wisdom and compassion to know how to come alongside and support those who are not experiencing the joy of Easter
- The open door of our church that they might signify the welcome and acceptance you offer

And for the newly married royal couple:

Almighty and merciful Father, the strength of all who put their trust in you, we pray that, as you have brought William and Catherine together, you will so enrich them by your grace that they may truly and faithfully keep those vows which they have made to one another in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## St Swithun's Guild

After 39 years the Guild faces a crisis. With the dearth of Ann Skinner it does not have a secretary, and without one it faces closure.

The membership is very senior. Some members have already completed years of service for the Guild and cannot be expected to do more.

Is there any lady who would like to join the Guild and take on the role of secretary?

This would mean finding speakers for the 7/8 meetings a year for which a speaker is needed, and attending the monthly meeting.

A new secretary would ensure the Guild's survival. Are there any volunteers?

**Barbara Boyne (tel 735634)**

## Church flowers

After many years of dedicated service, Gwyneth Thomas is stepping down from arranging the church flowers. Gwyneth, thank you for all you have done for so many years, and for ensuring that the church is a beautiful place to worship in.

If we are to continue to enjoy the church with flowers in, we need a volunteer to take over this role. It involves buying the flowers, arranging them on a Friday or Saturday, watering them twice a week, liaising with brides about wedding flowers and decorating the church with flowers on special occasions.

Is this something you could take on? If not on your own, with a friend? Please do think about this and speak to me or to Isabel Baggott if you would like to take up this ministry. Thank You.

**Em Coley**

## Three Parishes Pilgrimage

### Sunday 24 July 2011

Following our enjoyable 3-Parish outings to Winchester and Salisbury, we have arranged to visit Worcester this year, and hope that you will want to join us.

The timetable for the day will be roughly as follows:

**9.00am** Coach leaves Radley, calling at service bus stops through Kennington (journey approximately 2 hours).

**11.00am** A chance to explore Worcester: e.g. a walk along the River Severn or a visit to the Royal Worcester Museum.

**12.00noon** The option of visiting the choir, which will be in use during the afternoon tour.

**1.00pm** Three-Parish buffet lunch.

**2.00-3.00pm** An optional guided tour of the cathedral.

**3.00-3.45pm** Time to relax and find a cup of tea.

**3.45pm** Assemble for Choral Evensong.

**5.30pm** Coach departs.

**7.30pm** Arrive in Kennington and Radley

An alternative programme can be arranged for those with young children.

Please sign the list at the back of the church by Sunday 18 June if you would like to go. The approximate cost (to include coach, lunch and guided tour of cathedral) will be £26.00.

Alternatively contact Gillian Cox on 01865 735590/[gilliancox@ntlworld.com](mailto:gilliancox@ntlworld.com) or Julia Kent on 01865 739047/[julia@franklinsolicitors.co.uk](mailto:julia@franklinsolicitors.co.uk)



## Giving

The average giving by gift-aided donations to the Church of England nationwide is £9.77 per week. Only 25 per cent of our regular givers either match or exceed that figure. The average for St Swithun's is £6.70. Last year the amount raised by regular giving (including tax refunds) was £25,435, but the parish share was £27,696, so we did not meet our obligation to the diocese out of regular giving.

We only manage to make ends meet because we have a number of people who give freely of their time, talents, and equipment for cleaning, grass cutting and various other maintenance jobs. We had to fundraise last year (£3,800) to meet our basic obligations.

It costs £3500 to maintain the church (£1140 for heating and lighting and £1040 for insurance). The rest of the money goes on central heating maintenance, organ tuning (£600), and wine, wafers, candles etc. £3500 is spent on music and administration costs. The church hall cost £2900 last year – almost £1350 was for maintenance including £720 for renewing the electrics and £250 for the new water heater (one-off costs unlikely to recur). We lost almost £1,700 on the hall last year.

Our parish share this year is £29,585 and our average attendance is 57. That means that in order to pay our parish share purely from our giving, each person who attends needs to pay slightly under £10 per week. Contrast that with the £6.70 in the first para!

*Brian Baggott*

## Growing your money



Calling all kids!

How is your money tree coming on? Is it still a little shoot or is it growing a few branches?

If you need a few ideas why not try some of these:

- Making cakes, biscuits, or sweets, and selling them (I have already bought my first batch from Esme)
- Cleaning cars, shoes, windows, bedroom
- Washing up, dusting
- Growing seeds and selling the produce
- Making cards, jewellery
- Painting nails
- Putting on a concert with family and friends
- Selling some books, toys, dvds

Later in the year there will be a chance to sell the things that you have made after church.

Happy money making.

Have fun.

*Mary Dennett*

## Church Garden Working Party



On **Saturday 21 May**, Rosey is organising another garden working party. Come along to the church grounds with garden gloves and secateurs etc. Anytime between 10am and 3pm, even just an hour will help. Bring your lunch.

## The Easter Experience

At the end of term we welcomed 180 children from Key Stage 2 to experience Easter – the event was powerful and moving. Thank you to all who made it a success.



## From the Editor



Here is a meditation from Simon Parke:

When a lake turns to ice; or when rain becomes snow, something fluid is given shape. What had no fixed shape now acquires one, presenting to the world in a new manner.

The watery essence remains; only the form has changed.

The form of our lives changes also; a constant becoming and unbecoming. This is not always easy. We sometimes hold onto old empires and cling to pillars which once supported us. We keep pictures of how things were, and record kisses and precious moments in diary and on film. "Lest they are lost!" we say. "Put down the anchors in the sea of change. May nothing be lost!"

But fear not. Nothing is ever lost, for the essence was always you; the source always you. Fluid, hardening, solid, melting, fluid, hardening, solid, melting...

Becoming, unbecoming, becoming...

*Jackie Smith*

### Clergy:

Rev Em Coley 01865 735135;  
emcoley@me.com

Rev Pam McKellen 01235 554739;  
p.mckellen@btinternet.com

### Newsletter Editor:

Jackie Smith 01865 326175;  
jacquelinesmith0@gmail.com

### Church Wardens:

Isabel Baggott 730950

Gerry Bowen-Thomas 739356

Bill Hunwick 739311

## Dates for Your Diary

### Sunday 1 May

6.30pm. Refresh - a quiet service at St Swithun's Church

### Sunday 8 May

6.30pm Evening Prayer, Church of the Good Shepherd

### Saturday 14 May

10.00am -12.00 noon Craft Morning

### Sunday 22 May

12.30pm Church Picnic Abbey Meadows

### Sunday 22 May

6.30pm Kennington Cancer Service

### Sunday 5 June

6.30pm Refresh

### Saturday 11 June

10.00am -12.00 noon Craft Morning

### Saturday 18 June

Fete

### Sunday 12 June

6.30pm Pentecost CTK Songs of Praise

### Monday 27 June

All Day Prayer Chain in St Swithun's

## Something to Say?

Please send any contributions for the St Swithun's Church newsletter to the Editor, Jackie Smith. We welcome text and/or pictures (in particular it would be good to build up a bank of pictures reflecting church life, so if you have any please do send them in).

Don't worry if writing isn't your thing - Jackie can help you with the right form of words.

**Deadline for copy: 20 May 2011**